State to announce to His Excellency the German Ambassador that all diplomatic relations between the United States and the German Empire are severed and that the American Ambassador to Berlin will immediately be withdrawn ; and, in accordance with this decision, to hand to His Excellency his passports.[55]

Diplomatic relations severed

Yet the President's hopes died hard, for he proceeded while deploring the attitude of the German Government, to assert that notwithstanding their action,

" I refuse to believe that it is the intention of the German Authorities to do in fact what they have warned us they will feel at liberty to do. I cannot bring myself to believe that they will indeed pay no regard to the ancient friendship between their people and our own. . . . Only actual overt acts on their part can make me believe it even now."

At the same time he felt himself compelled to sound a warning note, in a final forlorn hope of deterring Germany from driving him from his neutral position. If American ships and lives were in fact sacrificed by German submarines, he said :—

Warning to Germany

" I shall take the liberty of coming

again before Congress to ask that authority be given me to use any means that may be necessary for the protection of our seamen and our people in the prosecution